

# 59

# MENDELL'S FOLLY

Bethany, CT

The largest property belonging to the Bethany Land Trust, Mendell's Folly is a 125-acre site given to the Trust in 1971 by Elizabeth "Tibby" Mendell. One of the original incorporators of the Trust, Tibby and her husband Clarence Mendell, the former Dean of Yale College and Sterling Professor of Classics at Yale, had purchased the property and adjoining pieces in 1936. In all, the Mendells acquired 190 acres. Some of the land had been a cow pasture, some an apple orchard, some just plain Bethany woods. It's been said that one of Clarence Mendell's students, on seeing this wilderness of muddy fields and rocky hillsides, called it Mendell's Folly — a play on the name Seward's Folly given to the

U.S. purchase of Alaska. After Clarence Mendell died, Tibby remained in Bethany on her "Folly." Mendell's Folly includes heavily wooded hills, rocky outcrops and ridges, a charming brook, a marsh, a beaver lodge and dam, a ravine, and lots of wildlife and wildflowers. Hockanum Brook, or Lebanon Brook as it is sometimes called, flows through the property westward from Bethany's Veterans Memorial Park toward Beacon Falls and eventually the Naugatuck River. The stream widens into a marsh in the middle of the property, where beaver have felled many trees and created a small pond. The hiking trails also have limited biking and horseback riding. Tibby's Trail (3,477 feet) offers good views

of Hockanum Brook and the marsh, but becomes somewhat difficult near the beaver dam. The White Birches Trail (2,621 feet) has some steep, rocky inclines and rises to 560 feet. The Beaver Trail (1,886 feet) starts out easy but presents some difficult passages near the pond.

Photograph by Kay Andresen, Bethany Land Trust



## Directions and Parking:

The main entrance to Mendell's Folly is located on an abandoned section of Northrup Road reached via (Route 42) by taking the access road at 355 Beacon Road. A small parking area is available at the end of this road. The main entrance can also be reached by parking at the end of Northrup Road and walking down the unpaved portion. Another entrance is located off Route 42 in Beacon Falls, with limited parking (1 or 2 cars) by the side of the road.

## Permitted Activities:

This land is for passive recreation use only—no motorized vehicles are permitted. Dogs are allowed only if heeled or on a leash. Please pick up all pet waste. Horseback riding is permitted only on marked trails. Hunting or trapping on Trust Land is prohibited.

## For more information about this location, contact:

Bethany Land Trust  
Trails Chairman J.B. Gardner  
(203) 393-2778  
[www.bethanylandtrust.org](http://www.bethanylandtrust.org)

*This project made possible through a grant from the National Recreational Trails Program, the Federal Highway Administration, and the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection.*



*Mapping for this brochure has been produced by John Triana of the Regional Water Authority.*

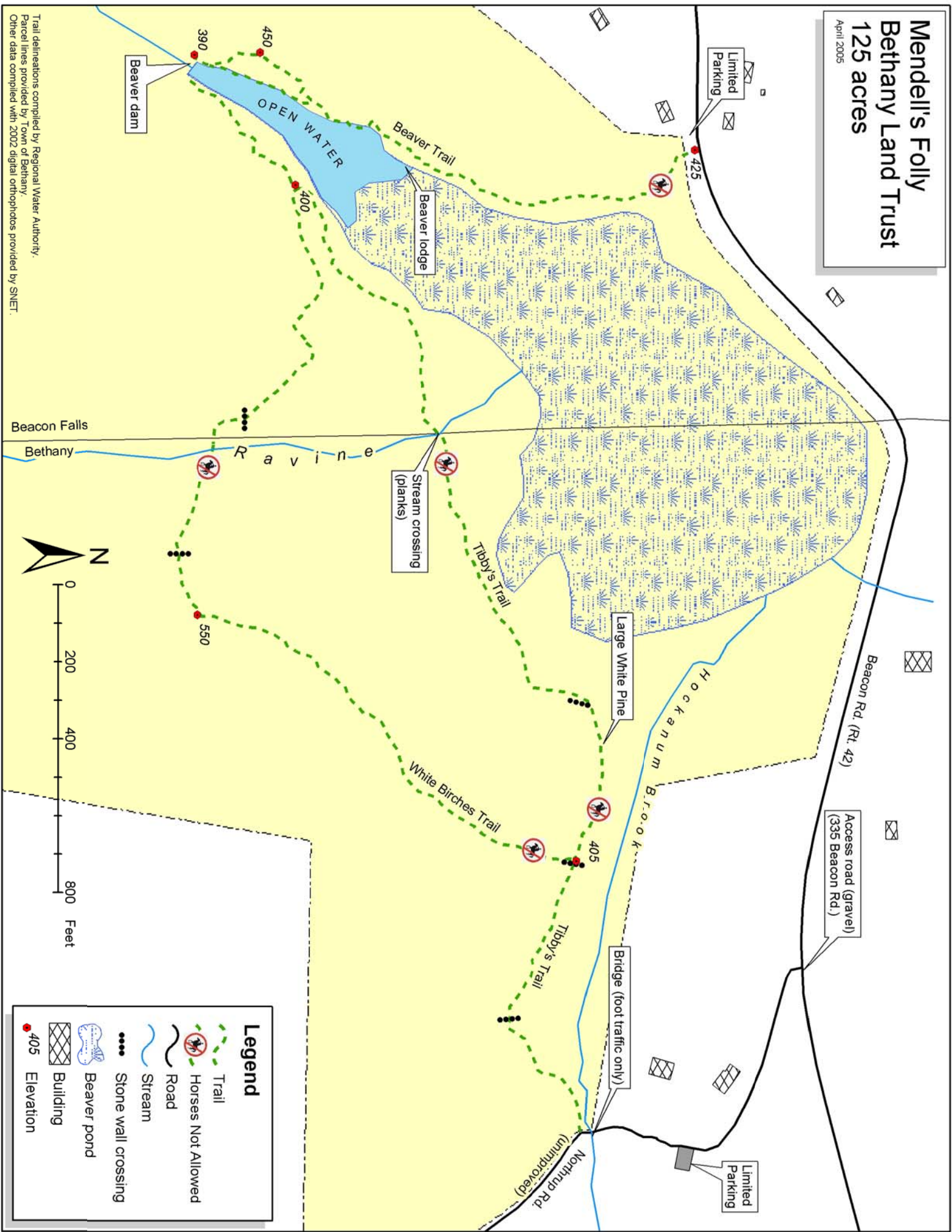
## South Central Regional Council of Governments

127 Washington Avenue, 4th Floor West  
North Haven, CT 06473

Phone: (203) 234-7555  
Fax: (203) 234-9850  
E-mail: [trails@scrcog.org](mailto:trails@scrcog.org)

# Mendell's Folly Bethany Land Trust 125 acres

April 2005



Trail delineations compiled by Regional Water Authority.  
Parcel lines provided by Town of Bethany.  
Other data compiled with 2002 digital orthophotos provided by SNET.

## Legend

- Trail
- Horses Not Allowed
- Road
- Stream
- Stone wall crossing
- Beaver pond
- Building
- 405 Elevation